

Remarks

This response is to the restriction requirement mailed November 17, 2004. In the Office Action the Examiner indicated an election between three species of the claimed invention would be required before prosecution of the application could continue. The Examiner has identified the species as follows: Species 1 relating to Figure 5; Species 2 relating to Figure 5A; and Species 3 relating to Figures 8 and 8A.

In response to the Examiner's restriction requirement, it is respectfully submitted that the basis for distinction between the species suggested by the Examiner is unclear. Applicants' representative has carefully reviewed the Figures and claims and has been unable to determine the Examiner's rationale for the species determination. The basis relied upon by the Examiner appears to be arbitrary. It is further submitted that at least independent claims 1, 13 and 20 cover the embodiments shown in the Figures referenced above and as such any one of the three independent claims could be considered generic to the referenced Figures. As such it is believed the Examiner's restriction requirement is improper.

Applicants' representative submits that no additional burden would be placed upon the Patent and Trademark Office by searching and examining each and every claim in the current application. Applicants further submit that additional fees are required to prosecute the separate groupings suggested by the Examiner. It is the Applicants' position that this burden is unfair and that the subject matter of each and every Figure in the application could be searched at the same time without additional burden being placed upon the Patent and Trademark Office. That is, a search of the embodiment of Figure 5 will be sufficient to provide information necessary to the examine that which is shown in Figures 5A, 8, and 8A.

Nevertheless, in a good faith effort to advance prosecution, Applicants will **provisionally elect** Species 1 (relating to Figure 5) as identified by the Examiner. In any event, it is Applicants' position that at least claims 1-11, and 13-20 read on Figure 5.

The Examiner is also requiring a subspecies restriction between Figure 6 and Figure 10. The relevance of the Examiner's restriction requirement is not appreciated as Figures 6 and 10 illustrate exemplary ferrules suitable for use with one or more of the connectors or adapters claimed in the claims elected above. In a good faith effort to advance prosecution, Applicants **provisionally elect** the subspecies relating to Figure 6; although the restriction between the subspecies is believed to improper as the claims of the present invention do not include limitations which require differentiation between components of Figures 6 and 10. In any event, it is Applicants' position that at least claims 1-11, and 13-20 are directed to the provisionally elected species and subspecies.

These elections are made **with traverse** for at least the reasons identified above. Applicants specifically reserve the right to seek patent protection for non-elected subject matter by divisional application. Further, upon allowance of a generic claim, Applicants intend to seek consideration of

the claims which the Examiner considers to be of another species.

The undersigned may be reached at: 770-587-7183.

Respectfully submitted,

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